

## Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2364

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMCONSUL DANANG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USDEL JEC PARIS UNN

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

USLO PEKING

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

CINCPACFLT MAKALAPA HI

CINCPACAF HICKAM AFB HI

CG FMFPAC

CDR USSAG NKP RTAFB IMMEDIATE

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COMUSMACTHAI

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 5 SAIGON 2951/1

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, MILI, VS

SUBJ: VIET-NAM WEEKLY CEASE-FIRE ASSESSMENT, FEB 27- MAR 5, 1974

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

PART 1--SUMMARY

1. INCIDENTS IN MR 1 REMAINED AT LAST WEEK'S INCREASED LEVEL AND WERE ALL SOUTH OF THE HAI VAN PASS. QUANG NGAI PROVINCE AGAIN BORE THE BRUNT OF COMMUNIST ACTIVITY. THE NUMBER OF INCIDENTS IN MR 2 DROPPED AGAIN AND WAS THE LOWEST SINCE TET. PLEIKU AND BINH DINH THOUGH BOTH QUIETER THAN LAST WEEK AGAIN HAD THE MOST ACTIVITY. THREE SUCCESSFUL TERRORIST INCIDENTS WERE CARRIED OUT AGAINST VILLAGE AND HAMLET OFFICIALS IN BINH DINH. IN KHANH HOA THE GVN SCORED A NOTABLE SUCCESS WHEN AN OPERATION AGAINST THE VC PROVINCE COMMITTEE RESULTED IN THE DEATH OF THE VC PROVINCE FINANCE AND ECONOMY CHIEF, HIS DEPUTY, AND FIFTEEN OTHER VC, AND THE CAPTURE OF NUMEROUS DOCUMENTS. INCREASED ARVN AGGRESSIVENESS CAUSED A RISE IN INCIDENTS IN MR 3 AFTER LAST WEEK'S DECREASE. ARVN ACTIVITY PROBABLY PROVOKED MORE FREQUENT GROUND ATTACKS AND ATTACKS BY FIRE. GROUND CLASHES OCCURRED IN ALL PROVINCES WITH SHARP INCREASES IN BOTH GVN AND COMMUNIST CASUALTIES; COMMUNIST ARTILLERY USAGE TRIPLED. UNCERTAINTY HAS INCREASED OVER WHETHER THE NVA FIFTH DIVISION HAS MOVED TO MR 4 OR HAS REMAINED IN MR 3. NEW INTELLIGENCE SUGGESTS THAT THE FIFTH MAY BE PREPARING FOR ATTACKS IN TAY NINH PROVINCE. OVER-ALL INCIDENTS DECREASED IN MR 4. IN AN XUYEN ONE REGIMENT OF THE ARVN TWENTY-FIRST DIVISION SUFFERED A SHARP DEFEAT IN THE SOUTHERN U MINH FOREST AND HAD TO BE REPLACED. COMMUNIST ATTACKS ON THE REGIMENT MAY HAVE BEEN RELATED TO ATTEMPTS TO OPEN A LINE OF COMMUNICATIONS FROM CHUNG THEIN PROVINCE

TO THE SEA TO SUPPLEMENT INFILTRATION ROUTE 1C. IN THE UPPER DELTA THE MAJOR GVN OPERATION UNDER WAY AGAINST COMMUNIST BASE AREA 470 AT TRI PHAP IN KIEN TUONG PROVINCE CONTINUES TO BE THE FOCUS OF MILITARY

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ACTIVITY. IN THE CENTRAL DELTA, THE GVN CONTINUES TO BE CONCERNED ABOUT

THE DETERIORATED SITUATION IN TRA ON DISTRICT ON THE VINH BING-VIN LONG BORDER. IN A MOVE THEY HAVE ATTEMPTED TO RELATE TO THE VIETNAMESE

POW RELEASES, WHICH BEGAN FEB 8, THE COMMUNISTS AGREED TO RETURN THE REMAINS OF TWELVE OF THE TWENTY-THREE US MILITARY PERSONNEL KNOWN TO HAVE DIED IN NORTH VIET-NAM.

PART II--ICCS

2. PRINCIPAL ICCS SUBSTANTIVE ACTIVITY WAS SUPERVISION OF THE EXCHANGE OF PRISONERS BETWEEN THE GVN AND THE "PRG". TOP ICCS OFFICIALS (BOTH CIVILIAN AND MILITARY) FLEW TO EXCHANGE SITES IN VARIOUS REGIONS FOR THE PURPOSE.

3. WITHIN THE ICCS, MEETINGS AND NEGOTIATIONS WERE MARKED BY TENSIONS BETWEEN THE INDONESIAN AND IRANIAN DELEGATIONS AS WELL AS BY CONTINUED ATTEMPTS BY THE POLISH AND HUNGARIAN DELEGATIONS TO SEEK UNANIMOUS ICCS AGREEMENT TO EVACUATE FURTHER SUB-REGIONAL TEAM SITES AS "UNSAFE". THE INDONESIANS ASSERTED TO EMBOFFS THAT THE IRANIANS CONTINUE TO SEEK TO STRADDLE A POSITION BETWEEN THE INDONESIAN AND COMMUNIST DELEGATIONS AND IN PLENARY SESSIONS "LET THE INDONESIANS DOWN" BY SUDDENLY AGREEING TO COMPROMISE POSITIONS IN PROCEDURAL DISCUSSIONS ON POSSIBLE FURTHER SITE EVACUATION AND ON THE COMMUNIST INSISTENCE ON JOINT GVN-"PRG" SPECIFIC SAFETY GUARANTEES FOR INVESTIGATIONS. THE IRANIANS IN CONVERSATIONS WITH EMBOFFS HAVE STRONGLY CRITICIZED INDONESIAN MALADMINISTRATION OF THE ICCS SECRETARIAT AND ALLEGED INEPTNES IN NEGOTIATIONS. AT THE BEGINNING OF MARCH IRDEL BY AGREEMENT TOOK OVER THE DIRECTION OF THE SECRETARIAT, WHICH MAY LEAD TO MORE EFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATION.

4. FEBRUARY CHAIRMAN DHARSONO (INDODEL) AND ACTING DIRECTOR GENERAL COL ZARIN-KHAME (IRDEL) HAVE BOTH SOUGHT APPOINTMENTS IN THE GVN FOREIGN MINISTRY AT TOP LEVEL TO DISCUSS THE CURRENT FINANCIAL CRISIS IN ORDER TO SECURE AN ADDITIONAL GVN CONTRIBUTION.

PART III--FPJMT: REPATRIATION OF DIC REMAINS.

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5. US REPRESENTATIVES OF THE JCRC AND THE FPJMT TRAVELED TO HANOI ON MARCH 6 TO RECEIVE THE REMAINS OF TWELVE OF THE TWENTY-THREE KNOWN US MILITARY PERSONNEL WHO DIED IN CAPTIVITY (DIC) IN NORTH VIET-NAM. PRIVATE BILATERAL HDLQWSSIONS RELATED TO THE REPATRIATION OF THE DIC REMAINS BEGAN ON FEB 5 WHEN THE DRV DELEGATION INFORMED THE US DELEGATION THAT BECAUSE THE RELEASE OF CIVILIAN VIETNAMESE DETAINEES WOULD BEGIN IN FEB 8 IT WAS POSSIBLE TO BEGIN DISCUSSIONS CONCERNING THE REPATRIATION OF THE US REMAINS. THROUGHOUT THE NEGOTIATIONS THE DRV ATTEMPTED TO LINK THE REPATRIATION OF THE DIC REMAINS (ARTICLE 8 (B) TO THE DRV'S DEFINITION OF US "RESPONSIBILITY" FOR OTHER ARTICLES OF THE PARIS ACCORDS, A LINKAGE THE DRV HAS CONSISTENTLY ATTEMPTED TO MAKE SINCE THE CEASE-FIRE AND WHICH THE US HAS JUST AS CONSISTENTLY REFUSED. THE REPATRIATION OF THE DIC REMAINS WENT FORWARD WITHOUT A CHANGE IN THE US POSITION.

PART IV--TPJMC: PERSONNEL RELEASES--PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE.

6. WITH PERSONNEL RELEASES IN THE LAST DAY OF THEIR THIRD AND FINAL PHASE, THE GVN THIS MORNING ANNOUNCED AGREEMENT ON AN ADDENDUM--THE RELEASE OF 97 ADDITIONAL ENEMY POWS TOMORROW, MARCH 7. THIS WOULD BRING TO 130 THE NUMBER OF POWS RELEASED BY THE GVN DURING THE CURRENT ROUND. THE GVN CATEGORIZES THESE 130 POWS AS FOLLOWS: 87 WHO WERE SERVING SENTENCES FOR CIVIL OFFENSES AT THE TIME OF LAST YEARS'S RELEASES, THREE WHO HAD BEEN ILL IN HOSPITAL, AND 40 WHO HAD EVIDENTLY BEEN OVERLOOKED LAST YEAR.

7. THROUGH MARCH 5, THE GVN HAS RELEASED 33 POWS AND 3,442 CIVILIAN DETAINEES, 110 OF WHOM HAVE CHOSEN NOT TO STAKE THEIR FUTURES ON THE COMMUNISTS. THE COMMUNISTS CLAIM THAT 77 OF THESE WERE NOT THEIR PERSONNEL TO BEGIN WITH, AND THAT THE GVN

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AMEMBASSY PARIS  
USDEL JEC PARIS UNN  
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMCONSUL NHA TRANG  
AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH  
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN  
AMEMBASSY TOKYO  
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMEMBASSY WARSAW  
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON  
USLO PEKING  
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI  
CINCPACFLT MAKALAPA HI  
CINCPACAF HICKAM AFB HI  
CG FMFPAC  
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PART VI -- MR 1.

1. SECURITY SITUATION:

ACCORDING TO I CORPS HEADQUARTERS THERE WERE 81 CEASEFIRE VIOLATIONS LAST WEEK, A DAILY AVERAGE OF 12 AND A VERY SLIGHT INCREASE OVER LAST WEEK'S TOTAL OF 78. GVN CASUALTIES: 39 KIA; 229 WIA. NVA/VC LOSSES: 128 KIA, 2 RETURNEES.

2. NORTH OF THE HAI VAN PASS:

THERE WERE NO INCIDENTS IN QUANG TRI AND IN THUA THIEN MILITARY ACTIVITY REMAINED LIGHT.

3. SOUTH OF THE HAI VAN PASS:

IN QUANG NAM THE ENEMY CONCENTRATED MUCH OF HIS ACTIVITY (MOSTLY MINING INCIDENTS) AGAINST GVN PACIFICATION EFFORTS IN DIEN BAN DISTRICT. THE VC ALSO HARASSED GVN EFFORTS IN THE "ARIZONA TERRITORY" OF NORTHERN DUC DUC AND SOUTHERN DAI LOC DISTRICTS, BURNING 200 TEMPORARY HUTS IN LOC TAN VILLAGE AND 13 IN LOC SON. GIAO THUY RESETTLEMENT CAMP IN DAI LOC WAS ALSO ATTACKED AND 6 CIVILIANS WOUNDED. IN HOA VANG DISTRICT A ROCKET WAS FIRED AT A POL STORAGE FACILITY ON FEB. 27 AND NEARBY ON MARCH 4 THE DANANG-HUE TRAIN WAS AGAIN MINED.

4. QUANG TIN WAS MORE ACTIVE THAN USUAL, ALTHOUGH NONE OF THE INCIDENTS WERE OF PARTICULAR SIGNIFICANCE. IN QUANG NGAI ALTHOUGH THERE WAS A SLIGHT DECREASE IN MILITARY ACTION, THE NUMBER OF INCIDENTS REMAINED AT A HIGH LEVEL. BINH SON DISTRICT TOWN WAS SHELLED FOR THE SECOND WEEK IN A ROW ALTHOUGH NO CASUALTIES RESULTED. THE ENEMY CONTINUED TO BE PARTICULARLY

ACTIVE IN TU NGHIA, SON TINH, MO DUC AND DUC PHO IN WHAT  
APPEARS TO BE REACTIONS TO GVN OPERATIONS THERE.

5. ICCS:

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THERE WAS NO REPORTED ACTIVITY IN ICCS REGION I. IN REGION II  
THE INDONESIANS AND IRANIANS OBSERVED THE SITE OF THE ROCKET  
FIRED AT THE POL STORAGE FACILITY IN QUANG NAM.

PART VII -- MR 2.

1. STATISTICAL SUMMARY: FOR THE SECOND CONSECUTIVE WEEK THERE  
WAS A DECLINE IN THE NUMBER OF INCIDENTS BRIEFED IN NHA TRANG.  
THIS WEEK'S TOTAL OF 96 IS THE LOWEST FIGURE SINCE TET. LAST  
WEEK THERE WERE 119 INCIDENTS. PLEIKU AND BINH DINH HAD THE  
LARGEST NUMBER WITH 24 AND 21 RESPECTIVELY. INCIDENTS WERE  
ALSO REPORTED IN DARLAC (14), KONTUM (11), BINH THUAN (11),  
PHU YEN (10), QUANG DUC (4) AND KHANH HOA (1). RVNAF CASUALTIES  
WERE PLACED AT 170, DOWN FROM 192. AIR STRIKES TOOK PLACE IN  
PLEIKU (59), KONTUM (24), QUANG DUC (18), NINH THUAN (8),  
BINH DINH (6), DARLAC (6) AND BINH THUAN (4).

2. PLEIKU/KONTUM: THE NUMEROUS CONTACTS IN PLEIKU DURING THE  
WEEK WERE MOSTLY MINOR ATTACKS BY FIRE. MOST OCCURRED WEST  
OF THE PROVINCIAL CAPITAL. CONSTRUCTION OF THE PREVIOUSLY  
REPORTED TANK TRENCH IS COMPLETE. A FORMAL CEREMONY IS SCHEDULED  
FOR MARCH 6. CONTACTS NORTHEAST OF KONTUM CITY IN THE VICINITY  
OF KON BRAIH CONTINUE TO DECREASE. THE 1ST BATTALION OF THE 41ST  
REGIMENT IS NOW IN RESERVE IN THE CITY.

3. BINH DINH/PHU YEN: THERE WERE THREE SUCCESSFUL TERRORIST  
INCIDENTS DIRECTED AGAINST VILLAGE AND HAMLET OFFICIALS IN  
BINH DINH DURING THE PAST WEEK. AT 1430 HRS ON FEB 26 TWO VC  
DRESSED AS RANGERS ENTERED AN EATING PLACE IN TAM QUAN DISTRICT  
AND KILLED A VILLAGE CHIEF, TWO VIS CADRE AND TWO PF SOLDIERS.  
THE VILLAGE CHIEF HAD REPORTEDLY ARRESTED A VC AGENT EARLIER  
IN THE DAY. AT 1040 HRS ON MARCH 4. TWO PERSONS WEARING UNIFORMS  
OF THE 232 RF BATTALION ENTERED A HAMLET OFFICE LOCATED 12 KM  
NW OF PHU CAT AND KILLED THE HAMLET CHIEF AND HIS DEPUTY. ON  
THE SAME DAY, AT 2100 HRS, AN UNIDENTIFIED PERSON THREW A GRENADE  
INTO A HAMLET OFFICE 5 KM NORTH OF AN NHON, WOUNDING A HAMLET  
CHIEF AND HIS DEPUTY. OTHER MILITARY ACTION FOLLOWED THE NORMAL  
PATTERN AND WAS CHARACTERIZED BY MININGS AND MINOR ATTACKS BY  
FIRE IN THE NORTHERN DISTRICTS. THE PROVINCE REPRESENTATIVE IN  
PHU YEN REPORTS 20 INCIDENTS, A SHARP INCREASE FROM THE AVERAGE  
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OF RECENT WEEKS. THE INCIDENTS, WHICH WERE ALL MINOR, INCLUDED THREE ABDUCTIONS IN TUY HOA DISTRICT, RESULTING IN THE LOSS OF SIX CIVILIANS.

4. DARLAC: IN CONTRAST TO THE 14 INCIDENTS BRIEFED IN NHA TRANG FOR THE WEEK, OUR PROVINCE REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS 23 FROM FEB 27 TO MARCH 3. THIS REFLECTS THE CONTINUING OPERATIONS OF THE 44TH AND 45TH REGIMENTS TO THE WEST AND NW OF BAN DON. IN A MOVE THE 23RD DIVISION COMMANDER BELIEVES IS DESIGNED TO ALLOW THE COMMUNISTS TO PREPARE AN ATTACK ON BAN DON OR BAN ME THUOT, THE COMMUNISTS HAVE BARRED LUMBERMEN FROM THE AREA THEY CONTROL EAST OF BAN DON. ACCORDING TO A LATE REPORT, THE COMMUNISTS CAPTURED SOME TWO HUNDRED PERSONS FROM DRAI SI VILLAGE WHILE THEY WERE FISHING IN THE VICINITY OF AQ 916285. THEY RELEASED THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN, BUT CONTINUE TO HOLD A HAMLET CHIEF AND  
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5. OTHER AREAS: ACTIVITY IN QUANG DUC PROVINCE IS RELATIVELY LIGHT; CONTACT RESULTS FROM GVN INITIATIVES DESIGNED TO HARASS THE COMMUNISTS AND KEEP THEM OFF BALANCE. THE GVN IS ATTEMPTING TO BRING BU BONG AND BU PRANG WITHIN RANGE OF ITS ARTILLERY. GVN ATTEMPTS TO CLEAR COMMUNIST FORCES OUT OF SOUTHERN AN PHUOC DISTRICT IN NINH THUAN PROVINCE ARE MEETING SCATTERED RESISTANCE IN THE FORM OF MINING AND SNIPING INCIDENTS. THE DISTRICT HEADQUARTERS WAS MORTARED ON FEB 28, CAUSING NO DAMAGE OR CASUALTIES. ON MARCH 1, THE COMMUNISTS SHELLED THE BINH TU RESETTLEMENT SITE, IN BINH THUAN PROVINCE, RESULTING IN TWO CIVILIANS KILLED AND 27 WOUNDED. THE RF SUFFERED 2 KIA AND 7 WIA WHILE KILLING TWO COMMUNISTS AND CAPTURING A B-40 ROCKET LAUNCHER ALONG WITH SEVERAL B-40 AND AK-47 ROUNDS. AN OPERATION IN KHANH HOA PROVINCE ON MARCH 5 RESULTED IN THE DEATH OF THE VC FINANCE AND ECONOMY CHIEF, HIS DEPUTY AND 15 OTHER COMMUNISTS. THE KHANH HOA SECTOR INTELLIGENCE PLATOON ALSO CAPTURED US\$1,650, 20 KILOS OF DOCUMENTS AND SEVERAL SMALL ARMS. BOTH THE INTELLIGENCE PLATOON COMMANDER AND HIS DEPUTY WERE KILLED IN THE ACTION.

6. ICCS: THE RELEASE OF FIVE PRISONERS WHICH HAD BEEN SCHEDULED IN PHU YEN FOR FEB 26 WAS RESCHEDULED DUE TO BAD WEATHER AND "TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES". IT WAS COMPLETED WITHOUT DIFFICULTY ON FEB 28. AT DUC NGHIEP, IN PLEIKU PROVINCE, 99 PRISONERS WERE RELEASED ON FEB 26 AND AN ADDITIONAL 50 ON MARCH 2. ONE PERSON, SAID TO SHOW SIGNS OF INSANITY, CHOSE TO REMAIN WITH THE COMMUNISTS RATHER THAN ACCEPT RELEASE AT DUC NGHIEP ON FEB 26.

PART VIII -- MR 3.

1. MILITARY INCIDENTS, AGAIN ON THE RISE IN MR 3, CLIMBED TO 181 DURING WEEK UNDER REVIEW COMPARED WITH 155 IN PREVIOUS PERIOD. A FACTOR CONTRIBUTING TO THE HIGHER LEVEL OF COMBAT IS THE INCREASED AGGRESSIVENESS OF SOME ARVN UNITS IN MOVING OUT FROM STATIC DEFENSIVE POSITIONS. THESE TACTICS HAVE BEEN INSTRU-



MENTAL IN PROVOKING MORE FREQUENT GROUND ATTACKS AND EXCHANGES  
OF ARTILLERY BARRAGES. WITH A VIEW TO THE NEXT RAINY SEASON,  
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WHEN HE THINKS COMMUNISTS MIGHT TRY TO TAKE SOME SMALL  
POPULATED AREAS, MR 3 COMMANDER HAS ASKED JGS TO SUPPLEMENT  
HIS ONE 175MM ARTILLERY BATTALION (12 GUNS) WITH TWO MORE  
BATTALIONS. HE WANTS TO BE ABLE TO PROTECT THE DONG XOAI  
AREA OF PHUOC LONG, CHON THANH IN SOUTHERN BINH LONG, TRI  
TAM IN WESTERN BINH DUONG AND THE NORTHERN APPROACHES TO TAY  
NINH CITY.

2. ALL PROVINCES REPORTED MILITARY CLASHES DURING PERIOD UNDER  
REVIEW WITH BINH LONG (34), BINH DUONG (31), TAY NINH (30) AND  
HAU NGHIA (27) IN THE FOREFRONT. GVN CASUALTIES INCREASED FROM  
230 TO 293 (67 KIA, 220 WIA, 6 MIA) WHILE ENEMY LOSSES WERE UP  
TO 91 KIA AND 1 CIA FROM 56 KIA AND 4 CIA IN PREVIOUS PERIOD.  
GROUND CONTACTS SHARPLY INCREASED TO 52 WITH AN UNUSUALLY LARGE  
NUMBER (12) BEING OF PLATOON SIZE OR LARGER. ATTACKS BY FIRE,  
AT 46, ALSO EXCEEDED LAST WEEK'S TOTAL AND 19 OF THEM WERE  
MAJOR (20 ROUNDS OR MORE). THERE WERE 56 MINE INCIDENTS, SAME  
AS PREVIOUS WEEK. GVN ARTILLERY FIRINGS FOR WEEK ENDING MARCH 2  
(GVN REPORTING PERIOD) WERE 11,131 DOWN 1,970 FROM WEEK BEFORE.

3. COMMUNIST ARTILLERY USAGE JUMPED TO 1270 ROUNDS AFTER ONLY  
388 ROUNDS WERE RECORDED LAST WEEK. MAJOR ATTACKS BY FIRE  
(ABF) WERE MADE AGAINST TONLE CHAM AND AN LOC IN BINH LONG  
AND AGAINST ELEMENTS OF THE ARVN 5TH AND 18TH DIVISIONS IN BOTH  
BINH DUONG AND PHUOC TUY. ONE BARRAGE OF 200 ROUNDS HIT ONLY  
7 KILOMETERS NORTHEAST OF LONG LE DISTRICT TOWN. AMONG 9  
RALLIERS WHO REPORTED TO THE GVN SIDE DURING WEEK, WERE A  
POLICE CHIEF, CHIEF OF A MILITARY INTELLIGENCE TEAM AND AN NVA  
DOCTOR. MR 3 HEADQUARTERS IS FOCUSING ATTENTION ON THE DOCTOR'S  
ASSERTION, DURING INTERROGATION PROCEEDINGS, THAT THE NVA 5TH  
DIVISION, RECENTLY BELIEVED TO BE MOVING SOUTH TO MR 4, WOULD  
INSTEAD ATTACK IN FORCE IN TAY NINH PROVINCE DURING THE THIRD  
WEEK OF MARCH.

4. IN BINH DUONG ELEMENTS OF THE ARVN 5TH DIVISION HAVE BEEN  
ENGAGED IN AN OPERATION INTENDED TO PUSH ENEMY TROOPS NORTHWARD,  
IMPROVE GVN CONTROL IN VICINITY OF BEN CAT AND LOOSEN THE ENEMY'S  
GRIP ON QL-13 TO CHON THANH. SHARP RESISTANCE WAS MET IN VICINITY  
OF LAI KHE AND BEN CAT. IN A BATTLE ON MARCH 3, SIX KILOMETERS  
NORTHWEST OF LAI KHE, THE 5TH TOOK 54 CASUALTIES (17 KIA, 37 WIA)  
WHILE INFLECTING 17 NVA/VC KIA AND 37 WIA. ACCORDING TO RECENT  
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INTELLIGENCE, NVA 7TH AND 9TH DIVISIONS MAY BE DIGGING IN TO

ESTABLISH A DEFENSE LINE ON BOTH SIDES OF QL-13 NOHNLLOF LAI KHE,  
POSSIBLY IN CONJUNCTION WITH PLANS TO PROVIDE REAR COVERAGE FOR  
THE NVA 5TH DIVISION SHOULD IT CARRY OUT ATTACKS IN TAY NINH  
PROVINCE.

5. FIGHTING IN BINH LONG PICKED UP, PARTICULARLY AROUND AN  
LOC, AS RF AND RANGER UNITS ATTEMPTED TO EXPAND THEIR PERIMETERS.  
A SAPPER UNIT PENETRATED DEFENSES SURROUNDING THE 46TH ARTIL  
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CG FMFPAC  
CDR USSAG NKP RTAFB IMMEDIATE  
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7. OTHER INCIDENTS DURING WEEK UNDER REVIEW INCLUDED: A) A GVN HELICOPTER ON A PRISONER EXCHANGE MISSION AT LOC NINH FEB. 27 WAS FIRED ON APPROXIMATELY 10 KILOMETERS SOUTH OF AN LOC. HELICOPTER WAS HIT IN THE TAIL SECTION, BUT WAS ABLE TO LAND SAFELY. B) THE 92ND RANGER BATTALION AT TONLE CHAM CALLED FOR AIRSTRIKES AGAINST A LARGE TRUCK AND ARMOR CONVOY RESULTING IN AT LEAST TWO T-54 TANKS DESTROYED. C) IN AN ACT OF TERRORISM AT A MARKET PLACE IN GIA DINH PROVINCE, VC DETONATED A MINE WHICH KILLED 5 CIVILIANS, INCLUDING AN ASSISTANT VILLAGE CHIEF, AND WOUNDED 6 OTHERS. D) NVA/VC KIDNAPPED 3 CIVILIANS AT BINH HOA VILLAGE, LONG KHANH PROVINCE.

PART IX -- MR 4.

1. SECURITY SITUATION: (A) OVERALL ACTIVITY: ACTIVITY IN THE DELTA DROPPED LAST WEEK, WITH CORPS REPORTING 397 VC/NVA-INITIATED INCIDENTS (539 LAST WEEK). THIS INCLUDED 42 GROUND ATTACKS (76 LAST WEEK), 233 ATTACKS BY FIRE (342), 103 HARASSMENTS ,(98), 4 INSTANCES OF SABOTAGE (8), AND 14 TERRORIST INCIDENTS (SAME AS LAST WEEK). REPORTED GVN CASUALTIES WERE 166 KILLED (221 LAST WEEK), 741 WOUNDED (880), AND 119 MISSING (UP FROM 95 LAST WEEK). THE GVN ALSO LOST 8 CREW-SERVED WEAPONS (5 LAST WEEK) AND 226 INDIVIDUAL WEAPONS (275). CORPS CLAIMS 572 VC/NVA KILLED (766 LAST WEEK), 13 PRISONERS AND SUSPECTS CAPTURED (33) AND 15 CREW-SERVED (39) AND 252 INDIVIDUAL (222) WEAPONS SEIZED. THE 32ND REGIMENT OF THE ARVN 21ST DIVISION WAS BADLY DEFEATED IN THE SOUTHERN U MINH FOREST AREA AND REPLACED BY THE 31ST REGIMENT. ACTION CONTINUES IN AND AROUND TRI PHAP, BUT INFORMATION IS SCARCE. CORPS G-2 EXPECTS ANOTHER VC HIGHPOINT TO BEGIN IN MID-MARCH, TO BE CONCENTRATED AGAINST GVN BASES ALONG THE CAMBODIAN BORDER AND DISTRICT TOWNS.

(B) ARVN DEFEAT IN NORTHERN ANXUYEN: IN VC MR3 TWO OF THE FOUR BATTALIONS OF THE VIET CONG D-2 REGIMENT MOVED WESTWARD FROM WESTERN CHUONG THIEN TO THE U MINH FOREST AREA, POSSIBLY WITH A VIEW TO ESTABLISHING A LINE OF COMMUNICATION FROM CHUONG  
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THIEN TO THE SEA TO SUPPLEMENT INFILTRATION ROUTE 1C. A MAJOR

VC VICTORY RESULTED FROM ATTACKS ON ELEMENTS  
OF THE 2ND AND 3RD BATTALIONS OF THE 32ND REGIMENT OF THE ARVN  
21ST DIVISION ALONG THE AN XUYEN-KIEN GIANG BORDER ABOUT 5 KILOMETERS  
FROM THE CHUONG THIEN BORDER. ON 25 FEBRUARY JUST AFTER NOON,  
ELEMENTS OF THE D-2 SIMULTANEOUSLY ATTACKED UNITS OF THE 2ND  
BATTALION (IN THE VICINITY OF WR 098430) AND THE 3RD BATTALION  
(SOME 2 KILOMETERS AWAY IN THE VICINITY OF WR 110430).  
FIGHTING CONTINUED UNTIL FEBRUARY 27, AND RADIO COWRT  
WITH  
BOTH BATTALIONS WAS CUT OFF FOR EXTENSIVE PERIODS. ACCORDING  
TO DIVISION SOURCES, THE 2ND BATTALION LOST 38 "MISSING" -  
PROBABLY MOSTLY KILLED - AND 28 WOUNDED; AND THE 3RD BATTALION  
LOST 33 "MISSING" AND 18 WOUNDED. AN XUYEN PROVINCE HOSPITAL  
RECEIVED OVER 100 WOUNDED. THE TWO BATTALIONS LOST AT LEAST 5  
RADIOS, 40 INDIVIDUAL WEAPONS AND 5 CREW-SERVED WEAPONS - INCLUDING  
ONE 105MM HOWITZER DESTROYED. LATE IN THE WEEK, THE REMANENTS  
OF THE REGIMENT WERE REMOVED FROM THE AREA TO THE 21ST DIVISION  
BASE AREA NEAR VI THANH AND REPLACED WITH ELEMENTS OF THE 31ST  
REGIMENT. A HIGH-RANKING MR4 OFFICER TOLD US THE TWO DEFEATED  
BATTALIONS, WHICH WERE MAKING A SWEEP OPERATION WHEN THE INITIAL  
CONTACTS OCCURRED, WERE NOT ON THE ALERT AS THEY SHOULD HAVE BEEN  
AND THAT DISCIPLINE QUICKLY DETERIORATED.

(C) SOUTHERN VC MR3, HOWEVER, WAS RELATIVELY QUIET. AN XUYEN  
REPORTS TWO GROUND ATTACKS AND 14 ATTACKS BY FIRE. AN ATTACK  
ON AN RF OUTPOST JUST TO THE EAST OF THE AFOREMENTIONED BATTLE-  
GROUND RESULTED IN THE LOSS OF 17 WEAPONS. BAC LIEU REPORTS NO  
GROUND ATTACKS AND JUST 4 ATTACKS BY FIRE. A MINE ON THE ROAD  
TO VINH CHAU DISTRICT TOWN CAUSED 8 GVN CASUALTIES AFTER THE VC  
HAD POSTED BANNERS IN THE AREA FORBIDDING USE OF THE ROAD. VC  
PRESSURE IN THE BAC LIEU-BA XUYEN BORDER AREA APPEARS TO HAVE  
RELAXED TEMPORARILY. BA XUYEN, HOWEVER, REPORTS 5 GROUND ATTACKS  
AND 28 ATTACKS BY FIRE. HEAVY VC PRESSURE IN THE THAN TRI-  
HOA TU DISTRICT BORDER AREA RESULTED IN 20 ATTACKS BY FIRE (LARGELY  
AGAINST OUTPOSTS), ONE GROUND ATTACK, AND THE ENCIRCLEMENT AND  
ISOLATION OF ANOTHER OUTPOST. TWO AMBUSHES IN LONG PHU DISTRICT  
ALONG THE BASSAC LEFT 8 PF KILLED, 9 WOUNDED AND 7 WEAPONS LOST.

(D) ELSEWHERE IN VC MR3, KIEN GIANG REPORTS A DROP IN VC/NVA-  
INITIATED INCIDENTS TO 70 FOR THE WEEK, AND THE LOSS IN HIEU LE  
DISTRICT OF ONE OUTPOST, ABANDONED UNDER PRESSURE WITH MINOR LOSSES.

A COMBINED ATTACK BY FIRE AND GROUND ATTACKS ON A PF OUTPOST

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IN NORTHERN KIEN AN DISTRICT THE SAME NIGHT WAS REPULSED WITH 7 PF  
WOUNDED AND 4 VC KILLED. CHUONG THIEN, THE VC MR3 H  
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ACTION EA-13

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-07 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SSO-00 INRE-00 PM-03 DODE-00 NEA-06

IO-03 DPW-01 SPC-01 SAM-01 AID-10 PRS-01 USIE-00

EUR-10 SR-02 DRC-01 /085 W  
----- 005070

O R 060930Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2368

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMCONKSL BIEN HOA

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMCONSUL DANANG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USDEL JEC PARIS UNN

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

USLO PEKING

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

CINCPACFLT MAKALAPA HI

CINCPACAF HICKAM AFB HI

CG FMFPAC

CDR USSAG NKP RTAFB IMMEDIATE

CINCUSARPAC FT SHAFTER

COMUSMACTHAI

DAO/ SAIGON/AOSOP-OR

USDEL FPJMT SAIGON

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(E) IN THE UPPER DELTA, GVN FORCES IN CHAU DOC AMBUSHED A  
GROUP OF NVA - PROBABLY FROM THE E-1 REGIMENT - ATTEMPTING  
TO REINFILTRATE THE TOP OF GIAI MOUNTAIN KILLING ONE AND CAPTURING

SOME WEAPONS. SOME NVA ARE REPORTED ALSO BACK ONTO MOUNTAIN.

(F) IN THE CENTRAL DELTA, VINH LONG REPORTS DECREASED ACTIVITY. THE NEW PROVINCE CHIEF APPEARS TO BE ACTIVELY CONCERNED ABOUT THE DETERIORATED SITUATION IN TRA ON DISTRICT (PREVIOUS SITREPS). THE 468 AND 469 RF BATTALIONS AND THE 747 RF COMPANY ALL ENCOUNTERED SERIOUS BOOBY TRAP INCIDENTS IN TRA ON DURING THE WEEK. ONE MINE, MADE FROM A 105MM HOWITZER SHELL, KILLED 3 RF AND WOUNDED. 7. ONE WATCHTOWER IN THE DISTRICT WAS OVERRUN AND DESTROYED, BUT WITHOUT PERSONNEL OR EQUIPMENT LOSSES IN THE ONLY GROUND ATTACK IN THE PROVINCE DURING THE WEEK. THE ARVN 7TH DIVISION HAS ESTABLISHED A LIGHT CP AT TRA ON TO COORDINATE OPERATIONS IN THE VINH LONG-VINH BINH BORDER AREA, BUT HAS NOT DESPATCHED ANY COMBAT UNITS TO THE AREA. ACTIVITY DROPPED OFF ALSO IN VINH BINH WITH NO GROUND ATTACKS OR ATTACKS BY FIRE. HOWEVER, IN CUA KE DISTRICT, 2 VILLAGES ARE VIRTUALLY ISOLATED. AN OPERATION INCLUDING THE 470, 404 AND 523 RF BATTALIONS OF FEBRUARY 28 IN THE NORTHWESTERN PART OF THE DISTRICT KILLED 26 VC AND CAPTURED SEVERAL WEAPONS, WITH ONLY 2 RF WOUNDED. ACTIVITY WAS LIGHT IN PHONG DINH, WITH NO GROUND ATTACKS AND JUST 7 ATTACKS BY FIRE. A DELAYED REPORT INDICATES HEAVY ACTION TOOK PLACE NEAR ROUTE 31 NEAR THE CHUONG THIEN BORDER ON FEBRUARY 20, WHICH CAUSED THE SUSPENSION OF CONSTRUCTION WORK TEMPORARILY ON THE ROAD, ALTHOUGH THE ROAD ITSELF WAS NOT CLOSED. CONTRARY TO A MARCH 3 STARS AND STRIPES AP REPORT, WE HAVE NO REPORTS OF SIGNIFICANT HIGHWAY INTERDICTIONS IN PHONG DINH OR ELSEWHERE IN THE DELTA.

(G) THE BATTLE FOR TRI PHAP: GVN OPERATIONS IN AND AROUND TRI PHAP CONTINUE, BUT DETAILS ARE TIGHTLY HELD. CORPS G-2 REPORTS THAT THE 367B SAPPER REGIMENT MAY FOLLOW THE NVA 5TH DIVISION FROM TAY NINH SOUTHWARD INTO THE NORTHERN DELTA. THE VC DONG THAP ONE REGIMENT, NOW IN SOUTHERN CAI LAY DISTRICT (DINH TUONG), HAS RECEIVED ORDERS TO GO NORTH - TO TRI PHAP OR PERHAPS FURTHER NORTH INTO KIEN TUONG - BUT HAS NOT YET BEGUN TO  
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MOVED TO TRI PHAP. OVERALL ACTIVITY REMAINED ABOUT CONSTANT IN DINH TUONG, WITH SECTOR REPORTING 11 GROUND ATTACKS (14 LAST WEEK) AND 39 ATTACKS BY FIRE (27 LAST WEEK). TO THE WEST, IN KIEN PHONG, IT IS REPORTED THAT THE 502A AND 502B VC MAIN FORCE BATTALIONS ARE CONCENTRATING FOR AN ATTACK ON CAO LANH PROVINCE TOWN. ON MARCH 3, AN ARVN AND RF SWEEP TO THE SOUTHEAST IN KIEN VAN DISTRICT ENCOUNTERED AND WAS COUNTERATTACKED BY PERHAPS 250 VC TROOPS FROM TWO BATTALIONS. THE GVN LOST 14 KILLED, 29 WOUNDED, 3 M-113 APC'S AND 7 RADIOS DESTROYED, AND 5 INDIVIDUAL AND 9 CREW-SERVED WEAPONS LOST WHILE CLAIMING JUST 7 VC KILLED. KIEN VAN DISTRICT TOWN WAS MORTARED 10 TIMES DURING THE WEEK, HONG NGU DISTRICT TOWN ALSO TOOK SEVERAL ROUNDS, BUT WITH INSIGNIFICANT RESULTS. THERE WERE 7 GROUND ATTACKS AND 28 ATTACKS BY FIRE ACROSS THE ENTIRE PROVINCE. KIEN TUONG SECOTR REPORTS REMARKABLY LITTLE ACTION:  
NO GROUND ATTACKS AND JUST ONE ATTACK BY FIRE. THE 9TH

DIVISION REPORTS CAPTURE THERE OF A CACHE OF 112 INDIVIDUAL AND AT LEAST 3 CREW-SERVED WEAPONS. THE RATE OF INCIDENTS INCREASED IN KIEN HOA, BUT REMAINED MINOR IN NATURE WITH THE NOTABLE EXCEPTION OF A SERIES OF ACTIONS ONE NIGHT: 12 82MM ROUNDS HIT BEN TRE CITY (THE FIRST MORTARING OF THE PROVINCE CAPITAL IN 15 MONTHS); A PF OUTPOST 5 KILOMETERS SOUTHEAST OF THE CITY WAS ATTACKED AND SEVERELY DAMAGED BUT NOT OVERRUN, WITH MINOR PERSONNEL LOSSES; AND SAPPERS DESTROYED A BRIDGE 80 PERCENT ON ROUTE 5 IN GIONG TROM DISTRICT.

2. ICCS ACTIVITIES: THE "PRG" MARCH 2 RELEASED 43 PRISONERS HELD IN THE UPPER U MINH FOREST IN KIEN GIANG AND 8 PRISONERS HELD IN SOUTHERN AN XUYEN. OF THE ORIGINAL 52 EXPECTED TO BE RELEASED IN KIEN GIANG, 3 REPORTEDLY ESCAPED BEFORE THE RELEASE, 5 RALLIED TO THE OTHER SIDE, AND ONE WAS IDENTIFIED BY GVN-TPJMC REPRESENTATIVES ON THE SPOT AS A SPY AND REJECTED BY THE GVN. ONE OF THE 9 EXPECTED IN AN XUYEN ALSO REPORTEDLY RALLIED TO THE OTHER SIDE. EXCEPT FOR SEVERAL SHOTS AT ONE GVN HELICOPTER IN AN XUYEN, THE RELEASE WENT SMOOTHLY, WITNESSED BY SEVERAL ICCS REPRESENTATIVES, INCLUDING IRANIAN AMBASSADOR SADRI. A MARCH 5 SAIGON POST REPORT THAT GROUND FIRE HIT AN AMERICAN-PILOTED HELICOPTER INVOLVED IN THE CAMAU PICKUP ERRS TWICE. THE REGION VII GVN-JMC CHIEF, WHO PARTICIPATED, TOLD US THE PILOT WAS VIETNAMESE AND THAT HE AND THE PILOT SEARCHED FOR BUT COULD NOT FIND BULLET HOLES IN THE AIRCRAFT. CONFIDENTIAL  
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## Message Attributes

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**Type:** TE  
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